

pure and perfect English, yet had much of that "strangeness," which Bacon notes as an element in all "Excellent Beauty." Both of them "lived with words," made friends with them, knew their kindred and associations, ancestry, and connections: they were learned in the literary lore of language, yet were writers of force and thought, whose "euphuistic" pains did not weaken their strength and substance. Almost any style, any vocabulary, is admissible, save only the slipshod. It is noticeable that the writers of marked and individual styles, whether the "curious" styles of Pater and Stevenson, or the simple styles of Newman and Arnold, are men of learning, men with a consciousness of their duty and responsibility: Dryden and Addison, Pope and Johnson, Hazlitt and Lamb, it is true of them. Men of reading, with deliberate theories and views, with tastes justifiable to scholarship: not wanton and illiterate writers, who stumble into chance felicities, and are capable of atrocities. This last breed of writers is growing common among us: men—sometimes full of a wayward charm, but unspeakably irritating—who jar upon the scholarly sense. It is good for them to remember that at no period of our literature have our best writers taken no thought for words; that throughout its history they have been busy with plans for "improving," or "correcting," or "fixing," that great trust, their native language. Wordsworth appeals to his countrymen, not only in the name of "the faith and morals" of Milton, but of "the tongue that Shakespeare spake." It is true enough that history cannot "explain" artistic genius: the *milieu* does not account for all. But historical study shows us our writers consciously handling, testing, developing, their materials: it takes us into the workshop, the studio, and lets us see varieties of aim and method and intention. It impresses upon us the difficulty of good writing and workmanlike style; it is fatal to the careless amateur; it helps us to understand what kind of licence is tolerable, and what foredoomed to failure; what sort of innovation inevitable, and what renovation possible. With Mr. Emerson's excellent lectures for guide, it is profitable and fascinating to follow the language in its wonderful progress, as it accepts and rejects, adapts and transforms, shapes and moulds, the various matters proposed to it. As Archbishop Trench has most popularly shown, such study is rich in human interest: the story of a word takes us to romance and psychology, with the liveliest interest in it all. "Grimm's Law," and the rest of it are not essential to be known by all, good as it is to have some science of philology; but an appreciative knowledge of the language in its historical forms and changes is binding upon almost every writer in some degree, and Mr. Emerson is here most helpful and suggestive. In the words of a living writer, it is the duty of us all to see that "the great treasure of speech committed to our charge suffer no diminution nor loss."

#### NATURE AND NATURAL RIGHTS.

**NATURAL RIGHTS.** By David G. Ritchie, M.A., Professor of Logic and Metaphysics in the University of St. Andrews. ("The Library of Philosophy.") London: Swan Sonnen-schein & Co.

"THE Academic study of political questions," says Prof. Ritchie towards the close of this volume, "is sorely needed, and the Academic temper in dealing with them." We cordially agree, but for the purposes of speech and writing, the Academic temper suffers the defects of its qualities. Though wisdom cry aloud in the streets, yet is she not heeded; how much less, then, when she speaks with the modest whisper of the Academic wise man, or with the doubt and hesitancy of his well-balanced conclusions? The partisan and the practical politician have so many natural advantages in the statement of their case, it is so easy and so popular to dismiss theories and fads, that we would gladly see the philosophers a little loud and dogmatic, or if that cannot be

reconciled to their consciences, at least as lucid and simple as possible in the arrangement of their material.

Our one and only complaint of Prof. Ritchie's "Natural Rights" is of this kind. So far from finding fault with it (as he suggests in his preface) for suspicion of partisanship, our complaint is exactly of the opposite kind. Mr. Ritchie has made the avoidance of partisanship almost a superstition. He is throughout too modestly tentative, and to this we attribute a certain dimness of outline which prevents an excellent book from achieving the total effect which it deserves. It is full of suggestion, most admirably furnished with illustration, and written almost uniformly in excellent style. But Mr. Ritchie rarely rehearses his conclusions, never sums up his chapters, and provides none of those links between one part of the argument and another which are so merciful an aid to the ordinary reader. There is often no particular reason why one chapter should follow rather than precede another, and the reader is often searching in his mind to discover the connection between the subject of a chapter and the subject of the whole book. The connection, we may add, is nearly always there, for Mr. Ritchie has at bottom a very clear and fine line of reasoning, but he assumes too much in his reader.

A destructive criticism of the theory of natural rights on high philosophic grounds would be merely killing the slain for those to whom such an argument appeals, and, as experience has abundantly shown, not even scotching it for all the rest of mankind. But the merit of Mr. Ritchie's book is that, while he repeats this process sufficiently for the purposes of the student, he grasps the real import of the theory of natural rights—namely, that it is an appeal to a social ideal arising naturally out of the assumption that the world is ordered by a purpose which can be ascertained by human reason. In the unhistorical period of politics, this ideal was referred back to a beginning when man was endowed by nature with rights, in a historical and experimental time it is projected forward to a time when he shall have won himself conditions which are proved by history and experience to conduce to his best-being. But the meaning of the appeal is, in both cases, essentially the same; it is from a present and imperfect condition to another, better and, of course, vaguer. And though the logicians may show us times without number the hopeless confusion which arises from the reference to Nature and the appeal to rights, both words will, we expect, continue to be used by the mass of speakers and writers. They are used, as Mr. Ritchie points out, by distinguished Conservatives at Primrose League Meetings, who talk of rights in precisely the same sense as Paine or Robespierre talked of them in the time of the French Revolution. The words, in fact, are so much in the mint of language that we doubt if the most precise writer or thinker could get on long without them. We should like, for an experiment, to place a political leader-writer under penalties not to use either of these words, except in a strict philosophical sense, for a period of six months. If he wrote in a hurry, as most of his kind do, we rather expect he would find himself considerably poorer in purse at the end of that period, and the extreme inconvenience he would have suffered would, we imagine, compel him to sue for release on any terms.

However, if the use of the terms is to be permitted, those who use them should be under no mistake as to their meaning. In the appeal to Nature and natural rights Mr. Ritchie very properly distinguishes two elements—a negative and a positive. It is an old commonplace, that "liberty is a negative term, but the same aspect of the term 'Nature' is not so generally recognised." Yet it is perhaps mainly negative, for it implies "an appeal against authorities that have lost their sacredness, against institutions that have outlived their usefulness; against artificiality in art, in literature, in manners,

in dress—against wigs and hair-powder." Similarly, the appeal to natural rights has an analogy with Protestantism; it is the appeal of the individual against authority. Of the two, the first aspect is perhaps the more important in respect of the assertion of rights. We might, indeed, venture the aphorism that when men say they have rights they usually mean that they are suffering wrongs. And in other cases the appeal is equally negative in the sense that it anticipates an attack upon some position secured by tradition or possession, as, for instance, when the Duke of Argyll talks about the natural law or right of "free contract," or when Lord Halsbury uses the language of the French Revolution and speaks about the right of labour and the right of property.

Prof. Ritchie, it will be seen, practically substitutes for "rights" that which is right, and that which is right in his view is what a reasonable man, looking at history and experience, would say was for the well-being of society at the particular time—the judgment, in fact, of the Aristotelian *Φρόνιμος*. This leads him to the examination of a great many concrete cases, which, if they take us rather far from the theory of rights sometimes, add substance and interest to the book. In these discussions Mr. Ritchie shows an ability and discursive-ness which reminds us at times of the late Mr. Charles Pearson. The chapter on Toleration is one of the best in the book, though, as he modestly confesses, one of the least complete. The formula that the rejection of authority should "mean nothing more than the rejection of authority which refuses to submit to any tests that carefully-trained human reason can apply," applies, at best, only to those cases where scientific tests, or something like them, are possible. The really difficult cases in life are those in which we have to determine the limits of authority in matters of opinion. Shall we accept religion on the authority of theologians, a policy on the authority of a statesman, economic laws, so-called, on the authority of economists, paintings on the authority of painters, poems on the authority of poets? Mr. Ritchie will answer that he tells us not what to accept, but to reject; but even so, his is rather a dangerous general rule. A man may be a quite competent authority on some points and yet, from infirmity of temper, impatient of critical tests. There are many such, and we reject them at our peril. The fact is, the formula is too personal. It is a matter of little consequence, in these days, whether an authority submits himself to tests or not. His work is public property, and anyone can test it. The question is not whether he submits to tests, but whether his work will stand the test; and that is true of churches and institutions as well as of individuals. There is still no better formula to cover the whole ground than the old Papal motto, *Securus judicat orbis*. However, not to part with Mr. Ritchie on a cavilling note, let us add that, as a whole, this is a singularly wise and enlightening book, which can be read with great profit both by students and practical politicians.

#### CICERO.

CICERO AND THE FALL OF THE ROMAN REPUBLIC. By J. L. Strachan-Davidson. ("Heroes of the Nations" Series.) London and New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons.

THIS is an admirable book. It is the work of a ripe scholar, who has spent a large part of his life in the study of Cicero, but who knows how to make himself intelligible to those who are ignorant of Cicero or of Latin. There is nothing pedantic about it, and yet nothing wild. The judgments are of that carefully guarded kind which one expects from the Balliol don, if not from the Balliol undergraduate; but they are judgments, for Mr. Strachan-Davidson knows how, after due consideration, to make up his mind. The scholar will read the book with

pleasure as a reminiscence. The schoolboy and the undergraduate must read it, for in no other book we know of will they get such intelligent guidance to the history of Cicero and his times. General readers, especially such as crave for information or attend University Extension lectures, will find it among the very few English books which really help to explain old Rome to the unlearned.

It gave us a shock at first, we confess, to find Mr. Strachan-Davidson writing of Cicero as among the "Heroes of the Nations." One fancied that they had scant mercy for the notion of a nation, and no quarter for the word "hero," in Balliol common-room. But the fault is rather with the Messrs. Putnam and with the University-extensionised reader. The hearts of the young women of two continents beat for heroes or similar exaggerations, and young women must perforce be considered by the publisher. Mr. Davidson cannot help himself. The old style of Oxford don taught nobody, and wrote books for posterity which no publisher would publish. The tutor of to-day teaches for the schools, and in the long vacation writes a book for a "series." This is one of the many effects of the abandonment of celibacy which jar upon the super-sensitive and please the sensible.

It is impossible for anyone to write about Cicero without some allusion to the struggle with the modern Cæsarians. The debating society which takes the place of a Union at Trinity College, Dublin, is called the Historical Society, and cannot discuss politics. It is easy to imagine what heat the students throw into the discussion of the character of Cromwell or the Roman Agrarian Laws. Restrictions on free speech in Germany, in the same way, drove politics into the study, and Cicero and Cæsar, as the types of Parliamentarian and saviour of society, have both suffered. Mr. Davidson has evidently scant sympathy with either party in this absurd combat. His liking for Cicero is chiefly due to the fact that he wrote good Latin, and he is not blind either to his personal shortcomings or to the narrowness of the Senators and the corruption of the knights. He has the respect which all sensible people have for Cæsar as a man who knew what he was about. "The difference," he says, "between Cæsar and Catilina reminds one of the choice placed before the peasant of the Scottish legend, who found himself in the presence of a magic sword and horn, and whose fate was to depend on whether he first drew the sword or first blew the horn. Cæsar avoided the challenge to Pompey until he had provided himself with a weapon. The fate of Catilina, even had his first effort succeeded, would have been that of the peasant in the tale, who was torn in pieces by the spirits whom his blast waked:

"Woe to the fool that ever he was born,  
That did not draw the sword before he blew the horn."

That legend sums up a good deal of the philosophy of life; but Cicero did not understand it much better than Catilina.

Mr. Davidson is also free from all trace of the even more vulgar prejudice, which has infected some great English scholars, of looking upon all Romans as if they were Englishmen. He recognises in his "hero" the failings to which rhetoricians among the Latin races are peculiarly prone. It says much for English enthusiasm for Parliamentary institutions that England has leaned to the Ciceronians in spite of the un-English faults of Cicero. Only once have we found Mr. Davidson falling into the old confusion between national types. He is speaking of the abuse of Vatinius in the speech for Sestius, and he adds: "It must be remembered, however, that the Romans tolerated, and expected, a roundness of invective which is much at variance with the greater decorum of modern habits of speech. One reason for the difference probably is that our notions of what is proper and gentlemanlike are an inheritance from days when the practice of duelling compelled everyone to be punctilious, both about the language he

used, and the language of which he must take notice." We really fail to notice any superiority in restraint in the French Chamber as compared with our Parliament, while in Dublin politicians seem to abuse one another neither more nor less than they did when they were the greatest fire-eaters in Europe. But this is the only sentence in the book which does not seem to us quite sane.

A very large part of the book is in the words of Cicero, excellently rendered, and the illustrations are, with few exceptions, not merely well-executed but apposite.

#### FICTION.

**THE HONOUR OF SAVELLI.** A Romance. By S. Levett Yeats. London: Sampson Low, Marston & Co.

**THE TRAIL OF THE SWORD.** By Gilbert Parker. London: Methuen & Co.

THE cycle of the ages is clearly bringing round to us once more the period of romantic fiction. Ten years ago the historical romance was rejected by publishers and public alike. They would have none of it. Scott had been all very well in his time, but actuality was now the order of the day, and no novelist was permitted to deal with any event more than twenty years old. All this has been changed now, and a number of brilliant writers who have devoted themselves to the production of historical fiction have reaped an exceeding rich reward for their daring in doing so. "The Honour of Savelli," by Mr. Levett Yeats, is so good a story, told with so much spirit, and inspired by so keen an eye for the picturesque, that we are inclined to think that a new and distinguished recruit has been added to this brilliant little band of romance-writers. In his preface Mr. Yeats modestly deprecates comparisons between himself and Mr. Stanley Weyman, and tells us that he had not read "A Gentleman of France" until after his own book was written. Mr. Yeats, however, need not be afraid of the comparison from which he shrinks. We do not, indeed, wish him to suppose that he has yet attained the masterly touch of Mr. Stanley Weyman. There are chapters in his present story, for example, which betray the weakness of the beginner in his craft. They are written with just as much care as any of the other chapters, but they fail to convince the reader, because for the moment his inspiration has manifestly fled from the writer and he has ceased to feel the story he has to tell. But this is a defect which practice—and practice alone—will enable a man to overcome. For the rest we recognise a very brilliant promise in this story, and we see no reason why its writer should not come to the front rank in the band he has joined. "The Honour of Savelli" is the story of the adventures of an Italian soldier of noble birth from the moment when, in order to shield a woman's honour, he has been plunged into the lowest depths of shame and expelled from the camp of the Duke of Tre-mouille as a convicted thief, until his honour re-established and his titles and rank restored, he becomes the husband of the woman he loves. There is plenty of incident of the exciting kind in the tale. Adventures and hairbreadth escapes abound, and we are brought into the presence of some of the most notable characters of the time, notably the Chevalier Bayard, Macchiavelli, the infamous Pope Alexander VI., and his still more infamous children, Cæsar and Lucrezia Borgia. No one who has even the most moderate acquaintance with history will need to be told that the times in which these persons lived were, in very truth, stormy ones. Mr. Yeats makes the best of them, and brings us face to face, for example, with more than one of the unfortunates whose lot it was to drink a glass of wine with Cæsar Borgia. The whole story is vivid and suggestive, as well as entralling, and it may be regarded as a welcome addition to the fiction of its class.

"The Trail of the Sword" is yet another tale of historical romance, but in this case the history is a little nearer to us, whilst the scene is laid still

further off. It is not in Italy, but in Canada and New England and the islands of the Western main, that the brilliant adventures described by Mr. Gilbert Parker take place; and, instead of Bayards and Borgias, we have knights and villains of another race and another mould, though at all times and under all suns the essential qualities of chivalry and villainy remain unchanged. And there is a great deal of chivalry, we are glad to say, in Mr. Parker's story, especially in the episode with which it ends. The plot hinges upon the rivalry of Pierre Le Moine, a French Canadian, with a certain George Gering, an English settler in New York in its primitive days. They both love Jessica Leverett, an English girl—Pierre with the hot passion of his race, Gering more soberly, but perhaps not less truly. Almost at the outset of the story, their rivalry leads to a duel, which is brought to a premature close by the interposition of the young lady. The two men love each other none the better because they have not been allowed to fight it out, and they part with vows of undying hatred on their lips. Gering's animosity towards Pierre is intensified by the fact that the latter has succeeded in rescuing the girl when she was being carried off by a savage scoundrel and pirate named Bucklaw. Presently other causes of quarrel come between the two men, and they are ranged against each other in the interests of their respective countries. In every encounter it is Pierre who gets the better of Gering, yet are they always foiled in their attempt to conclude their interrupted duel. And so things continue until Gering takes advantage of his nearness to Jessica to win the girl as his wife, although more than half her heart was all the time Pierre's. After this the Canadian's thirst for vengeance becomes acute, and the good priest who has been his friend and confidant throughout his life vainly preaches to him the duty of forgiveness. After divers fortunes and many struggles, the chance of securing that vengeance comes to Pierre. Gering has been captured as an English spy in the citadel of Quebec. A certain and shameful death awaits him; but Pierre, using his influence with the famous old governor, De Frontignac, is allowed to rescue Gering from prison. He does so in order that at last he and the man who has robbed him of his love may fight their duel to the death. How that duel is begun, and how midway it is interrupted by the same gentle voice that had caused them to lay down their swords in their first youthful encounter, and what manner of vengeance Pierre finally enjoys, is all told in the closing chapter, which is as pathetic and noble as it is strong. Mr. Parker has produced not a few notable and brilliant tales, but he has never done better than in "The Trail of the Sword."

#### FIRST IMPRESSIONS.\*

YEARS ago the late Dr. Norman MacLeod published a volume descriptive of life in the East; and now his daughter, Mrs. Wilson,<sup>\*\*</sup> "After Five Years in India," has attempted a similar task. The book is written with uncommon shrewdness and vivacity, and it gives an intimate picture of native life as it presented itself to an educated Englishwoman during her term

\* AFTER FIVE YEARS IN INDIA; OR, LIFE AND WORK IN A PUNJAB DISTRICT. Illustrated. By Anne C. Wilson, Author of "Life of Savarola," etc. London, Glasgow, and Dublin: Blackie & Son.

POPULAR SAYINGS DISSECTED. By A. Wallace. London: T. Fisher Unwin.

SUBJECT TO VANITY. By Margaret Benson. With Illustrations by the Author. London: Methuen & Co.

THE MINOR TACTICS OF CHESS. By Franklin K. Young and Edwin C. Howell. London: Chatto & Windus.

PEERAGE, BARONETAGE, KNIGHTAGE, AND HOUSE OF COMMONS FOR 1895. Edited by Edward Walford, M.A. London: Chatto & Windus.

THE PEOPLE'S LIFE OF WILLIAM Ewart GLADSTONE. With Fifty-five Illustrations. London, Paris, and Melbourne: Cassell & Co.

MANNERS, CUSTOMS, AND OBSERVANCES: Their Origin and Signification. By Leopold Wagner, Author of "Names and their Meaning," etc. London: William Heinemann.

WHILE LONDON SLEEPS. By Richard Dowling, Author of "London Town." London: Ward & Downey.

of residence in the Punjab. Mrs. Wilson, who is the wife of a deputy-commissioner and magistrate, had many opportunities of studying the manners and customs of the people, as well as of acquainting herself with the methods of administration adopted in India by the British Government. There is a cynical saying that the Government of India is a government by despatch-boxes, tempered by the occasional loss of a key, and there is just enough truth in the assertion to lend point to the sarcasm. Napoleon, when he conquered Europe, declares Mrs. Wilson, did not rule such diverse peoples and places as the Viceroy governs. The area to be administered in India is as large as Europe with Russia left out. There are eight vast provinces in British India, each with its separate Government, and the people they contain differ widely in race, religion, and language. The State in India, we are reminded, is the people's lawyer, judge, policeman, engineer, postman, schoolmaster, doctor, landlord, and philanthropist. Mrs. Wilson likens it to one of those Hindu idols which have arms in every direction, and she thinks that in no country in the world has Government done so much for the people. One of the chief benefits which England has bestowed on India is the uniform system of law—a boon which has made life much more endurable to the average native. Nine-tenths of the Government work in India is carried out by natives, and yet, as these pages show, neither the youth of the country nor the older generation is satisfied. No child in India is forced to enter Government schools; but, if his father sends him there, and he passes examinations, he thinks he has established a claim upon Government for employment. Knowledge—or, at least, the Western variety of it—is not valued for its own sake, but merely for its price in the market. Men of high caste, on the other hand, too old or too proud to learn, resent the progress of their social inferiors, and think—like thorough-paced Tories nearer home—that learning has upset to a perilous degree the old order of precedence in the world. Mrs. Wilson has much to say about the native point of view on this subject and on others, and her remarks on caste, in particular, strike us as uncommonly suggestive. Sometimes a good story crosses the page, and, oddly enough, the one which may be described as the pick of the basket—and with it we will end—is concerned with Thackeray and Carlyle:—"At a Royal Academy dinner, some artists, sitting in the neighbourhood of these great men, were expressing their enthusiasm about Titian. 'His glorious colouring is a fact about Titian!' said one man, striking the table to give emphasis to the remark. 'And his glorious drawing is another fact about Titian!' cried another artist. And so they went on, until Carlyle, who had been sitting listening in silence to their rhapsodies, interrupted them by saying, with a slow deliberation: 'And here sit I—a man made in the image of God, who knows nothing about Titian, and cares nothing about Titian: and that's another fact about Titian!' Thackeray was sipping claret at the moment. He paused, and bowed courteously to Carlyle. 'Pardon me,' he said, 'that is not a fact about Titian; but it is a fact—and a lamentable fact—about Thomas Carlyle!'"

Probably not one man in a hundred understands the occult allusions which lurk in the "Popular Sayings" which spring unbidden to his lips in ordinary talk. Mr. Wallace, to borrow his own ominous phrase, has "dissected" quite a number of pithy sayings, and he does his best to explain how they came into existence. Popular sayings are often the outcome either of long or of uncommon experience, and their roots are sometimes embedded in old custom, historic incident, or personal adventure. We confess that our confidence in Mr. Wallace's statements has been shaken by a chance discovery. He falls into the rather egregious error of confusing Thomas Morton, a well-known prelate who held in succession the sees of Chester, Lichfield, and Durham in the reigns of Charles I. and James I., with Thomas Morton the dramatist, who died in the present reign. He says that *Speed the Plough* was written by Bishop Morton in the sixteenth century, whereas Morton the dramatist wrote it in the year 1798, and made "What will Mrs. Grundy say?" current coin. Mr. Wallace is inclined to explain the obvious, for surely no one wants a commentary on "Like a toad under a harrow" and similar pithy, not to say pointed, remarks which are used in common speech.

"Subject to Vanity" is the title which Miss Margaret Benson, a daughter of the Archbishop of Canterbury, gives to a charming little book about her household pets. She has stories to tell of kittens and canaries, of chance acquaintance in the shape of mice and kids of the goats, and last, but not, of course, least, of dogs. There are some amusing anecdotes in the book about one great favourite in the Archbishop's household—a collie dog called Watch. The lady who presented the puppy had a sly sense of humour. She declared that the new arrival was called Watch, and she thought the name appropriate, since "He is a sheep-dog and you are a pastoral family." Watch rose to the dignity of Lambeth, and gave himself great airs. He was very exclusive, and refused to go walking with servants, and, though gentle and intelligent, he was jealous of other dogs, and sometimes developed the most extraordinary antipathies even to people who were well disposed to himself. One lady, a friend of the family, was devoted to Watch, but the dog resisted all her blandishments. He would not allow her to

touch him, he would not take food from her hand: "once, when he had accepted from someone else the food he had refused from her, he stopped eating it because he heard her laugh!" There is pleasant fancy in the book as well as shrewd observation, and Miss Benson always talks about her pets as if they were persons with whom she was accustomed to exchange confidences. Evidently she watches them closely and tends them kindly, and she has her reward in a friendliness which is sometimes embarrassing, and often mirth-provoking. Miss Benson has illustrated her book with portraits of her friends in fur and feathers.

In spite of all that has been written on the royal game, there is still room for a manual as practical and explicit as "The Minor Tactics of Chess." The aim of the book is to render the player a master of strategical resource, and to free him from the bondage of mechanical analysis by educating him step by step in the fundamental principles of the most fascinating of all intellectual pastimes. The book is not merely full of hints, but gives a singularly clear exposition of a new and ingenious theory of playing.

Mr. Edward Walford's diminutive books of reference on the "Peerage," "Baronetage," "Knighthage," and "House of Commons" have once more appeared in the familiar red, blue, brown, and green limp cloth covers. Each of these little volumes was revised in the dark days before Christmas, so that no one can quarrel with them on the ground that they are not up to date. They contain the usual alphabetical lists, short biographical notices, addresses, and other brief facts for the busy. This is the forty-first year of the appearance of this quartette of dwarfs in literature, and there is not a pin to choose amongst them as to which is best change for a shilling.

Messrs. Cassell and Company have published a shilling "People's Life of William Ewart Gladstone." It is a lucidly written, temperately worded, and finely illustrated monograph. The authorship of the volume is not stated, but whoever is responsible for it has had access to the latest information as well as to authoritative books and statements. Within less than the compass of two hundred pages the book gives an admirable survey of the facts and forces, personal, political, literary and social, which meet in Mr. Gladstone's remarkable record and yet more remarkable personality.

Mr. Leopold Wagner has compiled a book about the origin and significance of "Manners, Customs, and Observances." It deals with regal and ecclesiastical, naval and military, civic and social affairs and traditions. There is a good deal of quaint ecclesiastical lore in its pages, and some gossip about the Law Courts and the House of Commons, as well as about the highways and byways in which antiquaries are accustomed to revel. Quaes from all quarters have been gathered into these pages, and, though the compilation consists, like the majority of other works of the kind, of statements good, bad, and indifferent, it may fairly be added that the former predominate. There is considerable research in the volume, side by side with much rather obvious information.

"While London Sleeps" is the title of eighteen pen-and-ink sketches of the metropolis not merely after dark, but in the early hours after midnight, when the strayed reveller, the policeman, and poor waifs and strays of humanity are on the streets. Mr. Dowling makes us feel how truly London is, in poor James Thomson's phrase, a "City of Dreadful Night," for he interviews the poor fellows who are accustomed to doze on the benches in Hyde Park and along the Embankment; and he also describes the night scenes at the police-stations, and much else that is typical, as well as tragical, in the more sinister and terrible aspects of the great city. Here and there the book is melodramatic; but, on the whole, the picture which it presents is only too true to the sombre realism and bitter recklessness of the life it portrays.

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# THE SPEAKER

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 1895.

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## THE WEEK.

### PUBLIC AFFAIRS: AT HOME.

THE chief incident of the week in the House of Commons was the attempt of Sir Henry James on Thursday to carry a motion for the adjournment of the House against the Government on the question of the Indian cotton duties. It had been ascertained by the Opposition that certain of the Lancashire Liberal members were prepared to vote against the Government on this question. This inspired Sir Henry James with the idea of organising an attack by the whole force of the Opposition on the Government, the calculation being that with the help of these Lancashire Liberals Ministers would be defeated. It was a very cynical and unscrupulous step which the Opposition thus took. Mr. Balfour's illness prevented his being in the House on Thursday evening; but it is understood that he approved of the action of Sir Henry James, which is believed to have been inspired by Mr. Chamberlain. Fortunately, however, for the honour of Parliament, a large number of Tories and Liberal Unionists refused to follow their leaders in this attempt to make party capital out of a grave question of Indian government. Mr. Fowler's brilliant reply to Sir Henry James cut the ground from under the feet of the Opposition, and compelled Mr. Goschen formally to abandon the attack. In the end Ministers defeated Sir Henry James by the overwhelming majority of 195 votes—a very notable result.

THE debate on the Address, prolonged unreasonably for two weeks, was finally concluded on Monday night. The third vote of censure on the Government, moved during the course of the debate, was then rejected by a majority of fourteen. This amendment was moved by Mr. Chamberlain, and was a confused and ungrammatical rigmarole of words, condemning Ministers for proceeding with any legislation at all. Its introduction yesterday week was the occasion of a somewhat dramatic scene in the House of Commons. Mr. Chamberlain had evidently prepared himself for a great effort. His speech, however, was singularly wanting in the qualities which generally make his oratory impressive, and during the latter part he seemed to lose the attention of the House altogether. Mr. Asquith's reply, on the other hand, was recognised by everybody as the best debating speech he has yet made in Parliament, and his retort upon Mr. Chamberlain was as effective as it was severe. None of the

other speeches delivered on the amendment call for much notice, unless it be those of Mr. Labouchere and Sir Charles Dilke, both of whom went out of their way to attack the Prime Minister.

IT was after the rejection of Mr. Chamberlain's amendment by a majority of fourteen that a very serious incident happened. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, in carrying out an arrangement which, it was understood, had the assent of the front Opposition bench, moved that the debate on the Address should be forthwith closed. Mr. Woods, a Labour member, and Mr. Keir Hardie opposed this proposal, and divided the House against it. They not only took the whole Tory party into the lobby with them, but three Liberals, the result being that the Ministerial majority fell to eight. It is difficult to find any excuse for so wanton an act of disloyalty as that of which Mr. Woods and his friends were guilty. They imperilled the existence of the Government on a pretext that can only be described as ridiculous. On the following morning a meeting of the Cabinet was unexpectedly and hurriedly summoned. Popular rumour declared it had been called in consequence of the vote on the closure. Whether this was the case we do not pretend to know, but it would not be surprising if Ministers took a serious view of the incident.

ON Tuesday the House of Commons was engaged in discussing the kind of business which private members favour. The most important debate of the evening arose on a motion by Colonel Howard Vincent on the subject of the importation of prison-made goods from Germany. The Tory party rallied in support of the motion, which was not opposed by Ministers, who offered to refer the question of how to prevent the importation of these goods to a Select Committee. The most notable speech was one by Mr. Chamberlain, in which he bitterly attacked the Labour members, charging them with neglecting the interests of the working classes in order to support the Government, and declared that the question of prison-made brushes had now become one of party politics. Even the *Times* felt constrained to rebuke this singularly childish manifestation of political spleen.

THE Colchester election resulted in the return of the Liberal candidate, Sir Weetman Pearson, by a majority of 263 over his opponent, Captain Vereker. This result is a great triumph for the Liberal party in Colchester, and a material advantage to the